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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Reverend William Byrne, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Gracious and loving God, thank You for the blessings You have bestowed upon this Nation. Most especially, we thank You for the rights which You alone grant to all men and women, in particular, the gift of life and the right to pursue happiness.

Bless the men and women of this country who work to ensure that all men and women may enjoy these rights. Watch over those who protect our Nation, both military and civilian, at home and abroad.

Guard and protect those who have been devastated by storms and tornados this past week. Keep them safe and assist those who are working for relief. Comfort those who mourn, and welcome those who have died.

Bless these Representatives. May all they do begin with Your inspiration and find completion in Your love.

We ask this in Your holy name. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TEXAS WILDFIRES AND PAKISTAN

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, wildfires have raged in Texas because of a long drought this year. The town of Possum Kingdom, Texas, population 5,500, has burned up. This is one of the many photographs showing the raging fires throughout the State.

Statewide, two firefighters have been killed; 400 homes have been destroyed. The 9,000 fires have covered over 2,200,000 acres—this is the size of Rhode Island and Connecticut put together—and the costs of the devastating destruction are enormous.

The Governor has asked FEMA for a Federal disaster declaration because of the extensive fires, but the Governor has been turned down by the White House—no more additional help for Texas.

Too bad Texas isn't a foreign country like Pakistan. The Federal Government has shelled out over \$500 million for disaster aid to Pakistan citizens for the flooding in their country.

When Washington considers aid, if any, for disaster relief, it should at least consider Americans in Texas just as important as Pakistanis, but that doesn't appear to be the case. Meanwhile, the fires continue to burn in Texas.

And that's just the way it is.

REIN IN THE SPECULATION

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. American families and small businesses are being crushed by \$4 a gallon gas at the pump.

Now, the Republicans tell us, oh, it's plain old supply and demand; drill here now and fast in the future and that will solve the problem.

Well, actually supply is up—U.S. crude inventories are 12.6 million barrels over the 5-year average—and demand is down. So what's really going on?

Well, it's Big Oil and it's Wall Street. Goldman Sachs—no one less than Goldman Sachs—said that the culprit for inflating oil prices \$20 higher than what supply and demand dictate is excess speculation. Now, we wouldn't want to rein in the speculators because that's Wall Street and they're very generous to Republicans. And we wouldn't want to take on Big Oil, who's manipulating the market prices, because they contribute big-time to Republicans.

So let's just play pretend. Let's pretend we're doing something for consumers while hiding the culprits in plain sight. Speculation on Wall Street. They traded 189,000 contracts—that's 189 million barrels—by computer in 1 day last week, driving up the price for all Americans. Useless speculation.

Rein in the speculation. And take on Big Oil.

CONGRATULATIONS, CANADA

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week's historic election in Canada brought to power a conservative majority for Parliament. By winning a full majority of the 167 conservative seats, Prime Minister Stephen

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Harper will now have 4 years of uninterrupted government. Plans to create jobs without increasing taxes and paying down the national deficit are top priorities of this new majority.

The relationship of Canada and South Carolina has been strong for many years. This year marks the 50th annual Canadian-American Days Festival at Myrtle Beach, which celebrates the partnership between our citizens. We welcome Canadian vacationers. We are grateful that former South Carolina Speaker of the House, David Wilkins of Greenville, served as the United States Ambassador to Canada from 2005 to 2009. Canada is our leading trade partner, which I know firsthand and appreciate, with the Michelin Tire Corporation of Lexington producing earthmover tires for recovery of oil sands resources in Alberta.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observation of Teacher Appreciation Week, which commenced on May 2 and will end tomorrow. It's not only appropriate to recognize our hardworking and dedicated educators, it is necessary.

In honor of Teacher Appreciation Week, I would like to recognize all the teachers in my district. I have visited every school back home, and I feel fortunate to have the classrooms filled with passionate teachers who are committed to every student by addressing their needs and guaranteeing their academic success.

I would specifically like to recognize the 2011 Teacher of the Year recipients from the school districts in Anaheim and Santa Ana, California. Mr. Erick Rossman, Ms. Anne "Mac" Devine, Ms. Sylvia Immanuel, Ms. Michelle Majewski, Mr. John Lombardi, and Ms. Valencia Davis, thank you. Thank you for your passion and your outstanding success and work with our students.

DRILLING EQUALS AMERICAN JOBS

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALAZZO. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in strong support of H.R. 1230.

As the Congressman from Mississippi's gulf coast, I have seen firsthand the damaging effect of the administration's decision to delay lease sales for offshore oil exploration. I also have worked offshore myself as a rigger, a roustabout, and a materials manager. I understand the positive economic impact offshore jobs have on the local and regional economies. By the administra-

tion's own admission, we have already seen 12,000 jobs lost with a direct salary impact of \$500 million. To prevent these jobs from permanently being sent to other countries, we need firm timelines for considering permits to provide certainty to investors and employers.

I not only support the passage of the Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act, but I urge the administration to undo their record of blocking and delaying energy production and to proceed with scheduled lease sales promptly. We must not continue to unnecessarily sideline a vibrant industry that is critical to our economic and national security.

BIG OIL

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. In my home county of Los Angeles, hardworking, middle class families are struggling every day to put gas in their cars so that they can get to work and take their children to school. But I did a double take recently when I saw that a gas station in my district had the highest price per gallon in the country—almost \$5 a gallon.

What is the Republican response? They just released their budget. It gives more tax breaks to Big Oil. They don't want to reward you for working hard. They want to reward ExxonMobil which made \$34 billion last year in pure profits, more money than any other company in the world.

You are stuck paying over \$4 a gallon for gas and the Republicans also want you to pay \$4 billion in tax breaks for Big Oil?

Stop the \$4 billion Republican giveaway. Let's make smart investments that will lower gas prices and put Americans back to work. It is time to say "no" to the GOP, the Grand Oil Party.

GAS PRICES

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. I rise today to express the frustration of the good people of Missouri's Fourth District with our Nation's gas prices. As I traveled around the Fourth District last week speaking at eight town hall meetings, the one comment I heard everywhere I went was that gas prices are crippling our families and our businesses.

One over-the-road trucker that I visited with from El Dorado Springs told me that just a couple of years ago he would bring \$1,000 in cash on the road with him for a week's worth of diesel, but now he has to come up with \$2,500 in cash before climbing in the cab. This is extremely hard for someone just trying to make ends meet, and carrying so much cash is dangerous, too.

Every extra dollar in gas prices means one less dollar for a family's

food, clothes, or spending time together at a ball game. For the average driver, the increased cost of gas since the President took office is nearly \$1,100 a year.

We must stop the government from standing between its citizens and reasonable gas prices. This country has been blessed with some of the most abundant resources on the face of the Earth, but this administration has stood in the way of exploring and utilizing them at every turn. It's time for the President to get out of the way and let us get to work developing our own sources of energy.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE RECOVERY EFFORTS IN NORTH CAROLINA

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express appreciation for the good work on the part of local emergency responders, FEMA, the Division of Emergency Management, the American Red Cross, and the many other agencies that have been helping survivors in my congressional district recover from the devastating tornadoes that hit North Carolina on April 16.

I represent, Mr. Speaker, one of the hardest hit communities, Bertie County, where 12 people lost their lives, 50 were injured, and dozens are now homeless. I am grateful that President Barack Obama was very quick to announce that 19 counties were eligible for Federal disaster assistance, and the hard work toward recovery is now under way. More than 4,700 people in North Carolina have applied for State and Federal disaster assistance. We are a generous and resilient people, and I know we will recover.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in applauding the recovery efforts and in expressing deep sorrow for the victims and their families.

CONGRATULATING INDIANA ON ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THEIR LEGISLATIVE SESSION

(Mr. STUTZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the State of Indiana, Governor of Indiana Mitch Daniels, and Indiana State Legislature's accomplishments this past session that just ended.

I believe it is important to reflect momentarily on the achievements made in Indiana to give promise and hope that the same can be done here in Washington. Something I'm particularly proud of is the fact that Governor Daniels and the legislature have passed the fourth straight gimmick-free balanced budget for the State of Indiana which will give Indiana a budget in the black 8 years running. We can do the same here in Congress.